

Agenda Item: 9

To: Ethical Standards Committee

From: Chief Executive

Date: 4th February 2010

POLICE AUTHORITY VETTING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The support of the Committee is sought for the attached Police Authority Vetting Policy and Vetting Procedures.

2. Background

- 2.1 The previous Vetting Policy was approved by the Police Authority in 2007. This Policy has been reviewed in order to update but also to give a clear system and vetting criteria. This will ensure that vetting is carried out in a consistent way for Members, staff and volunteers.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to endorse the attached Police Authority Vetting Policy and Vetting Procedures.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

| Source Document (s) | Contact Officer | Location |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| Cambridgeshire Constabulary Vetting Systems | Dorothy Gregson Chief Executive | Cambridgeshire Police Authority, Hinchingsbrooke Park, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 6NP. |
| <p>Originating OfficerLouise Mann.....</p> <p>Is it considered that this report contains 'exempt information' and should be considered in private? NO</p> <p>If the answer is "YES", please state the nature of the exempt information and the relevant clause (s) by virtue of Part 1 of Revised Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.</p> <p>Nature of exempt information:None</p> <p>The attached report has been cleared with the undermentioned Officer/s who have assessed the exemption status above Chief Executive</p> <p>Others</p> <p>Submitted on28th January 2010.....</p> <p>A report will not be sent to the Authority unless this box has been satisfactorily completed and all necessary consultation carried out - the responsibility for which rests with the originator (except for consultation with the Chairman and this will be undertaken by the Chief Executive).</p> | | |

CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY



VETTING POLICY

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1. Introduction

This policy is intended to provide structured and accountable process for the vetting of Cambridgeshire Police Authority.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary is committed to the maintenance of high levels of honesty and integrity and to the prevention of and disruption of dishonest, unethical and unprofessional behaviour. This policy supports that commitment by creating an understanding of the principles of vetting in the Force, thereby establishing uniformity in vetting procedures.

Unauthorised disclosure of intelligence assets, either directly or indirectly, as a result of carelessness or by deliberate actions by dishonest or misguided members of staff, has serious implications for the police community, or impedes our ability to combat criminal behaviour and sustain crime reduction. Vetting provides a degree of assurance as to the integrity, reliability and trustworthiness of those who have access to Force assets, information and premises. Vetting is intended to assure that the individual has not been involved in espionage, terrorism, sabotage or actions intended to overthrow or undermine Parliamentary democracy by political, industrial or violent means. It also gives assurance that the individual has not been a member of, or associated with, any organisation which has advocated such activities or has demonstrated a lack of reliability through dishonesty, lack of integrity or behaviour. The process assures that the individual will not be subject to pressure or improper influence through past behaviour or personal circumstances.

Independent Members are subjected to vetting prior to appointment. Similarly, Magistrate Members are vetted before appointment to the Bench. Councillor Members are not security vetted by either their Councils or the Police Authority prior to appointment, although Members of Cambridgeshire County Council are checked out with the Criminal Records Bureau to ensure they have no history of inappropriate or illegal activities involving vulnerable people.

2. System of Classification

The system uses four levels of classification.

Top Secret

Information marked as 'Top Secret' is that whose accidental or deliberate compromise is liable to cause widespread loss of life, cause exceptionally grave damage to the continuing effectiveness of extremely valuable security or intelligence operations and threaten directly the International stability of the UK.

Secret

Information marked 'Secret' is that whose accidental or deliberate compromise is liable to threaten life directly, seriously prejudice public order or individual security or liberty. It would cause serious damage to the operational effectiveness or security of UK forces or to the continuing effectiveness of highly valuable security or intelligence operations.

Confidential

Information marked 'Confidential' is that whose accidental or deliberate compromise is liable to prejudice individual security or liberty. To cause damage to the operational effectiveness or security of UK forces, or to the effectiveness of valuable security or intelligence operations. It would impede the investigation or make the commission of serious crime easier and would shut down or substantially disrupt significant National operations.

Restricted

Information marked as Restricted is at a level where the accidental or deliberate compromise of the material will cause substantial distress to individuals, make it more difficult to maintain operational effectiveness or security, prejudice an investigation or make the commission of crime easier. It may breach statutory restrictions on disclosure of materials and may disadvantage us in policy or commercial negotiations.

3. Vetting Levels

There are three levels of vetting relevant to the purposes of the Police Authority:

Basic Check (BC)

A basic check is not a formal security clearance and is carried out to assure the identity, reliability and integrity of individuals whose work gives them unsupervised access to Cambridgeshire police premises.

This would be applied to all Police Officers, Specials, PCSO's and support staff (including agency temps, contractors, work experience, trainers and lay visitors) also any person within the Police authority remit.

This allows access of material up to 'CONFIDENTIAL' and occasional 'SECRET'.

The check comprises Professional Standards Databases, Police Local exchange (PLX), Case Administration & Tracking system (CATS) both Child Protection (CP) and Domestic Violence (DV) systems, Police National Computer (PNC), Crime Intelligence, Impact Nominal Index (INI) and Special Branch.

Within Cambridgeshire Constabulary Vetting Department the review period for Basic Check clearance is three years or less if personal circumstances change.

Counter Terrorism Check (CTC)

CTC Vetting applies to all newly appointed Police Officers, Special Constables and Support Staff (including PCSO's) who meet the criteria for CTC as defined by the Home Office guidelines –

' Counter Terrorist Checks are carried out to prevent those who may have connections with terrorist organisations, or who may be vulnerable to pressure from such organisations from gaining access to certain persons, premises and information, that could be exploited to further the aims of a terrorist organisation.

Security Check (SC)

A security check (SC) should be carried out on individuals who require long term, frequent and uncontrolled access up to SECRET government assets, and occasional access to TOP SECRET.

4. Vetting Requirements

Those to whom this policy applies will be informed on application of the vetting requirements and will be required to consent to enquiries being undertaken by Cambridgeshire Constabulary Vetting Unit on behalf of Cambridgeshire Police Authority. All Members, staff and volunteers must inform the Chief Executive and thus the Vetting Unit of any changes to personal circumstances, including relatives, and anything which may have a bearing on vetting requirements immediately.

Police Authority Members

In order for Members to have the necessary access to the information they need to effectively carry out their scrutiny role, all should be cleared to BC level.

In the area of Protective Services¹ certain nominated Police Authority Members and Officers involved in working in this area are to be cleared to SC level.

It is suggested that SC clearance should be restricted to:

- Chairman
- Vice-Chairman
- Lead Members for Protective Services or its components

¹ Protective Services includes the following: major crime, serious and organised crime, counter terrorism, domestic extremism, protecting vulnerable people, civil contingencies/emergencies, critical incidents, public order, strategic roads policing and firearms.

Police Authority Executive Team

The members of the Police Authority Executive Team should be cleared to BC level with the exception of the Chief Executive and the Performance and Policy Manager, for whom SC clearance should be sought.

Independent Custody Visitors

Independent Custody Visitors are subject to a Basic Check for which there is a specifically designed form, the Non- Police Personnel Vetting (NPPV) form. This form requires details of self and spouse or partner only, not parents, children and siblings as in the BC form. It does require the candidate to disclose details of any previous convictions.

Co-operation

The Constabulary requires the co-operation of the Security Services, Defence Vetting Agency (DVA) and other agencies in the processing of high level clearances.

5. Conclusion

This policy will ensure common standards and understanding of vetting. It will enable a consistent approach to decision-making and continuing to maintain high professional standards.

Police Authority Vetting Procedure

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1.0 Police Authority Vetting

- 1.1 Cambridgeshire Police Authority is committed to the highest possible standards of professional conduct. To this end it has adopted a Policy and Procedure as set out herein. The Police Authority Vetting Policy guidance should be read in conjunction with this procedure.

2.0 Qualifying Conditions

- 2.1 It should not be assumed that printed copies of this procedure document are current.
- 2.2 This procedure provides a framework of guidance to Police Authority personnel and its application has been assessed by the author as being appropriate in most anticipated situations; where, in exceptional circumstances, it is deemed necessary to override this procedure, members of staff may be asked to discuss their actions and to make recommendations to the author for appropriate changes to be made to the policy.

3.0 Procedure Objective

- 3.1 This procedure is intended to give guidance to those involved with the appointment of Cambridgeshire Police Authority. See Appendix A for flow chart showing vetting procedure.
- 3.2 The Vetting procedure has been devised to reduce the risk of the unauthorised disclosure of Force Intelligence by providing a degree of assurance as to the reliability and trustworthiness of both Members and volunteers of Cambridgeshire Police Authority.

4.0 Introduction

- 4.1 The procedure applies to all persons currently holding the appointments within Cambridgeshire Police Authority and to any new applicant to the role. Applicants who refuse to undertake the procedure will not be considered for appointment.

5.0 Guidance for Police Authority vetting

- 5.1 The Police authority admin team will send out a Non Police Personnel Vetting (NPPV) Basic Check Personal Information Form.
- 5.2 On receipt of a candidate's completed Personal Information Form the Vetting Unit will carry out the following checks:
 - Professional Standards Databases, Police Local exchange (PLX), Case Administration & Tracking system (CATS) both Child Protection (CP) and Domestic Violence (DV) systems, Police National Computer (PNC), Crime Intelligence, Impact Nominal Index (INI) and Special Branch.

- These checks MUST be completed prior to selection.
- The National Security Form, if required, will be input to the Security Services by the Vetting Manager.

6.0 Clearance Granted

- 6.1 Where clearance is granted the Vetting Manager will inform the Police Authority admin team and return the paperwork to the Authority office to be placed on personnel files.
- 6.2 The candidate will have their details entered onto the 'approved' contractors database.
- 6.3 The NPPV clearance is valid for 3 Years, after which time new forms must be completed and re-submitted.

7.0 Clearance Refused

- 7.1 Where clearance is questionable the file will be passed to the Detective Inspector, Intelligence & Integrity Unit, PSD for review.
- 7.2 Where the Vetting Managers decision is upheld an e-mail will be sent marked '**URGENT**' to the Chairperson of the Police Authority and the Policy & Performance Manager informing them that the applicant has not passed the security checks and therefore must not be used by the Police Authority.

8.0 Review/Renewal

- 8.1 The NPPV clearance is valid for 3 Years, after which time new forms must be completed and re-submitted.
- 8.2 Any significant change in circumstances (e.g. Change of name, change of address, change of marital status) plus any criminal convictions must be reported to the Police Authority and thus the Vetting Unit.

